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EFFECTS OF DROUGHT ON FALL SOWING IN YUGOSLAVIA

The following report discusses the effect of the drought in Yugoslavia on the fall sowing and on the germination of wheat, and reclamation measures being taken to make the soil resistant to drought.

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Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources. 7

Effects of Drought

The fall sowing up to early November 1953 was making very slow progress as a result of the lack of precipitation in October. There was sufficient rainfall only in Slovenia, western Croatia, southern Serbia, and part of Macedonia. There was very little rainfall in Yugoslavia's wheat-growing areas, namely, the Vojvodina, Slavonija, and the northern srezes of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia. During October, precipitation was sufficient in 31 percent of the Yugoslav agricultural area, abundant in 3 percent, and poor or very poor in 56 percent. By 31 October 1953, sowing was either just begun or only half completed in 50 Yugoslav srezes.

The lack of precipitation in October has resulted in the poor germination of wheat. Germination has been particularly poor in the wheat-growing areas where the rainfall reached a low in October.

Germination of winter wheat in these areas has been very poor in 15 percent of the area sown, poor in 57 percent, and good in 24 percent. Germination has not been very good anywhere in this area. Germination has been somewhat better in hilly and mountainous areas. In hilly areas, germination has been poor or very poor in about 40 percent of the area sown, but has been very good or excellent in the remaining areas. Germination has been similar in mountainous areas.

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In 50 srezes the wheat has not germinated, and in 90 srezes germination has been poor. (1)

[A map showing the effects of the drought on the germination of wheat is appended.]

Reclamation

Yugoslav agricultural experts believe that the decrease in the Yugoslav harvest yield is due to the fact that in a majority of agricultural centers the soil is not sufficiently resistant to drought. This condition results from backward methods of cultivation and disregard of basic agricultural technological measures, such as irrigation, reclamation, flood regulation, and similar measures.

Yugoslavia's richest agricultural areas, plains through which flow the country's largest rivers, are very suitable for the construction of an extensive irrigation system. The completion of the 260-kilometer Danube-Tisa-Danube Canal will make possible the establishment of a large irrigation system in the Vojvodina, which will reclaim approximately 500,000 hectares of fertile land and increase by one third the yield of 400,000 hectares of arable land. Currently, Yugoslavia has about 7,300,000 hectares of fertile land. The Danube-Tisa-Danube Canal will provide Yugoslavia with approximately 100,000 additional hectares of rice fields.

In Jelas Polje, which is first in Yugoslavia in the production of rice, a once marshy waste of more than 1,200 hectares has been successfully cultivated in the past 4 years. The irrigation system planned for Jelas Polje calls for the drainage of 20,100 hectares, and the expenditure of approximately 209 million dinars by the end of 1953. The system will be completed in 1954.

In Bic-Bosut Polje, a drainage canal is under construction to drain 40,000 hectares of marsh land. A total of 958,000 cubic meters of earth have been excavated, with an additional 922,000 cubic meters to be excavated. To date a total of 156 million dinars have been spent on this project.

Work is under way to make the present dam on the Sava River higher between Gunja and Zupanja, thus protecting an additional 180,000 hectares.

The reclamation of the Topolovac section of Lonjsko Polje is to be completed by the end of 1953. Drainage of 10,000 hectares has been completed to date, with an expenditure of 75 million dinars.

Drainage of 5,900 hectares of Sinjsko Polje is now in progress; by the end of 1953, 200 million dinars will have been spent on this project, completing the drainage of the area south of Cetina.

Drainage of Nadinsko Blato and Polacko Polje in the Vranje area will be completed by the end of 1953, reclaiming 3,331 hectares.

A total of 350 hectares have been reclaimed by the drainage of Neretvanska Blatija in the Luka area.

By the end of 1953, 92 million dinars will have been spent on irrigating 258 hectares on the right bank of the Mirna River.

In Baranja, 42 million dinars have been spent on the construction of the Zmajevac-Kopacevo dam to protect 29,000 hectares.

The Sava, Drava, and Mura rivers are being systematically regulated. It is highly important to protect the banks on the Yugoslav side of the Drava and Mura rivers along the Hungarian border, because of the better protective walls on the

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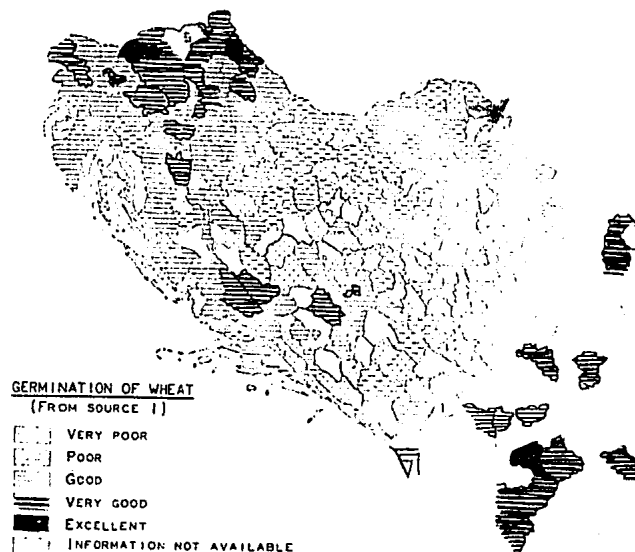
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Hungarian side. This project will entail large investments, and work is expected to continue into 1954. Regulation of the Sava River from Zagreb to the mouth of the Sutla River at Jesenice is under way, involving an expenditure of 533 million dinars. Work is under way on protecting the Zagreb-Belgrade highway from floods; 223 million dinars have been spent to date on the Ilova, Pakra, and Slobostina river sectors.

In the mountainous parts of Dalmatia, along the Croatian coast, and in Lika, 217 million dinars have been spent in the past 4 years to regulate floods. Although this work has been most frequently connected with other reclamation work, or has been done to protect settlements or communication lines, flood regulation and soil protection began on an extensive scale in 1953 as a part of the construction of hydroelectric plants. Major projects of this type completed to date have been in Sinj Srez, in the Suvađa area near Imotski, and on the Butisnica River in Knin Srez. Lesser projects have been completed in Split, Makarska, Dubrovnik, Šibenik, and Drnis srezes. Along the Croatian coast, 27 million dinars have been spent on flood regulation. In Istria, 48 million dinars have been spent for protection of coal mines from floods. In Lika, flood regulation has been continued at the source of the Zrmanja and of the Una at Srb, while a new project has been started at Pazariste. (2)

SOURCES

1. Borba, 15 Nov 53
2. Vjesnik, 7 Nov 53



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